

Message Text

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ORIGIN IO-04

INFO OCT-01 SS-05 ISO-00 AF-02 /012 R

DRAFTED BY:IO:UNA:BJSHARP
APPROVED BY:IO:UNA:JFTEFFT
AF:KBRILL

-----082343 280704Z /11

R 280433Z APR 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 5840

S E C R E T STATE 108504

LIMDIS FOR AMBASSADOR YOUNG FROM UNA

FOLLOWING TELEGRAM FROM PARIS DATED APRIL 25, 1978 SENT
SECSTATE WASHDC INFO NDJAMENA, TRIPOLI, NIAMEY, YAOUNDE,
CAIRO, KHARTOUM, LAGOS, DAKAR, DIA WASHDC IS REPEATED TO
YOU: QUOTE

S E C R E T PARIS 13369

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PEPR, MOPS, CH, FR
SUBJ: CHAD SITUATION: GLOOMY VIEW FROM THE ELYSEE

1. ON APRIL 25 CHARGE ACCOMPANIED BY POLITICAL OFFICER
CALLED ON PRESIDENT GISCARD'S ADVISOR ON AFRICAN
AFFAIRS, RENE JOURNIAC, FOR A DISCUSSION OF RECENT
CHAD DEVELOPMENTS. JOURNIAC, NEVER KNOWN FOR HIS
OPTIMISM IN ANY CASE, WAS PARTICULARLY GLOOMY ABOUT THE
CURRENT CHAD SITUATION WHICH HE DESCRIBED AS "VERY
BAD." FRENCH TROOPS CAN TAKE ON FROLINAT SOLDIERS
WELL ENOUGH, HE SAID, BUT THEY CAN'T DO THE JOB ALONE

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AND AFTER THE COLLAPSE AT FAYA THERE IS ALMOST NO CHAD
ARMY TO SPEAK OF. THE FRENCH IN NDJAMENA ARE PRESSING
THE GOC TO PROVIDE RECRUITS FOR TRAINING BUT THE
GOC CAN'T COME UP WITH THE MEN. IN THE PRESENT SITUA-
TION NO ONE WANTS TO COMMIT THEMSELVES TO THE GOVERN-
MENT.

2. THE REAL PROBLEM, HOWEVER, IS LESS IN THE PURELY MILITARY SITUATION WHICH FRENCH TROOPS MAY WELL BE ABLE TO STABILIZE, BUT IN THE DETERIORATION OF THE POLITICAL CLIMATE BEHIND THE DEFENSE LINE. POWERFUL RADIO TRANSMITTERS ARE BROADCASTING FROLINAT PROPAGANDA OUT OF LIBYA TO GOOD EFFECT. THERE HAVE BEEN ANTI-GOVERNMENT AND ANTI-FRENCH DEMONSTRATIONS IN A NUMBER OF PLACES AND THE SITUATION IN ABACHE AND NDJAMENA WHERE THERE ARE LARGE MUSLIM POPULATIONS IS PARTICULARLY WORRISOME. (JOURNIAC DESCRIBED NDJAMENA AS 80 PER CENT MUSLIM.) A GENERAL STRIKE HAS BEEN CALLED FOR THURSDAY. SECURITY COULD GET OUT OF HAND IN NDJAMENA WHICH JOURNIAC SAID WAS DEFENDED ONLY BY TWO COMPANIES OF SOLDIERS AND DID NOT HAVE EFFECTIVE POLICE.

3. JOURNIAC SAID THAT THE VISIT OF LIBYAN FOREIGN MINISTER TURAYKI TO PARIS HAD PRODUCED THE COMMUNICATION FROM QADHAFI TO FROLINAT CHARGING IT WITH HAVING BROKEN THE CEASEFIRE, BUT THAT IT WAS NOT OTHERWISE PRODUCTIVE. TURAYKI HAD TAKEN A FIRM POSITION ACCUSING MALLOUM OF RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE CONTINUED DETERIORATION OF THE SITUATION BY NOT ADHERING TO THE SEBHA AND BENGAZI AGREEMENTS. LIBYAN SUPPORT OF FROLINAT CONTINUES UNABATED.

4. JOURNIAC SAID THE FRENCH GOAL ALL ALONG HAS BEEN TO
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STABILIZE THE MILITARY SITUATION SO THAT A POLITICAL SOLUTION COULD TAKE FORM. UNDER PRESENT CIRCUMSTANCES A SOLUTION THROUGH SHUFFLING THE CHAD GOVERNMENT SEEMS OUT OF THE QUESTION. IN ITS PRESENT WEAKENED STATE THERE IS LITTLE INTEREST AMONG POLITICAL FIGURES IN RALLYING TO THE GOVERNMENT. AND AFTER ITS MILITARY AND NOW POLITICAL/SUBVERSIVE SUCCESSES FROLINAT APPEARS LESS WILLING THAN EVER FOR COMPROMISE.

5. ON THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL JOURNIAC SAID THAT FRENCH ACTIONS IN SUPPORT OF THE GOC WERE APPROVED BY MODERATE AFRICAN STATES WHICH SEE LIBYA AS THE AGENT OF RUSSIA IN NORTHERN AFRICA. NONE SEEM WILLING OR ABLE, HOWEVER, TO EXERT EFFECTIVE PRESSURE ON LIBYA. NIGERIA MIGHT BE IN A POSITION TO DO SO IN THE LONGER TERM AND SHOULD DO SO BECAUSE IT IS CLEARLY NOT IN NIGERIA'S INTEREST TO HAVE A RADICAL REVOLUTIONARY CHAD NEXT DOOR.

6. CHARGE REVIEWED BRIEFLY WHAT WE HAD TRIED TO DO TO HELP CHAD IN THE WAY OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT AND NOTED THAT THERE DID NOT APPEAR TO BE ANYTHING FURTHER WHICH

WE COULD DO AT THIS TIME. JOURNIAC ACCEPTED THIS WITHOUT COMMENT, BUT SUGGESTED THAT WE MIGHT HELP CHAD BY USING OUR INFLUENCE WITH THE NIGERIANS TO EXPLAIN THE REALITIES OF THE SITUATION THERE. GAMMON UNQUOTE VANCE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 apr 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE108504
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: IO:UNA:BJSHARP
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780181-0985
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t1978044/aaaaacwh.tel
Line Count: 120
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 905701ab-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN IO
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: LIMDIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2917003
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CHAD SITUATION: GLOOMY VIEW FROM THE ELYSEE
TAGS: PEPR, MOPS, CH, FR, CD, LY
To: USUN NEW YORK
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/905701ab-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014